Nekoashido - "The Way of the Cat's Foot" - in terms of the elements

Nekoashido is the name of the set of technical training drills of Mizuumi ryu Karate. Nekoashido is essentially the 'cat style' sub-system of Mizuumi ryu, which is the hybrid style of martial arts I created, and still actively develop. View the previous articles for more details on Mizuumi ryu and Nekoashido.

The 'five attitudes' below describe the more abstract concepts of Nekoashido. They can apply not only to combat, but also to freedom of expression in movement, as well as living life. Think carefully about the concepts below as you train and set goals for your own personal development of athletic ability. Skill, grace, and ease in movement are highly valued.

First element - Wind:

Keep moving, ready to change directions and angles at any time. Move through the situation with the right timing and distance. Be light and untouchable, yet move forward with an all-encompassing straight blast. Do not let your opponent know where you're coming from, or where you're going. This is like a cat running, pouncing, climbing, and jumping from many angles.

Second element - Fire:

Burn your way through the situation - not in anger, but with a strong decisiveness. Even the air itself is your fuel. In combat, everything provides you a potential combination. In life, everything provides a way to break free. This is like a cat, full of ferocity, confidence, and sheer aliveness.

Third element - Water:

Keep flowing from one movement to the next. Do not ever stop, yet be still in a relaxed focus. Take the path of least resistance. Allow thought and action to become one – your training should be second nature – like instinct. Your opponent can touch you, but cannot hold. If pulled, push like a tidal wave. If pushed, pulled the opponent into your lake of defense. This is like a cat, who is able to sense disturbance. She is also able to roll and squeeze out of many attacks, with poise, grace, fighting instinct, and incredible flexibility. She fits the shape of the situation, like water.

Fourth element - Earth:

Be strong and solid, yet changeable like clay. Earth is your strength, and foundation for power. This is like a cat stalking her prey. She moves low, in a poised yet calm fashion, looking for the best timing, distance, and angle of attack. She is also ready at any moment to hide under a large rock or upon a high branch. At the same time, she is also always ready to take a solid position on the ground where she may attack and defend with equal ability.

Fifth element - Metal:

A sharpened tool, a harnessed force of nature. Cut to the truth of all you perceive. Understanding and action quickly follow. Even one's own senses are not completely trusted, but rather re-trained to find the clearest path. This is like a cat ready to use her paws to control her prey, as she pierces with claw and teeth. She also uses her sharp claws as tools.